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ABSTRACT

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Youth Literacy Task Force of New York City. Included in the report are the following: a brief description of the Task Force's activities; a description of what the Task Force decided were appropriate and feasible effectiveness criteria for literacy programs for 14-21 year olds; a list of what the Task Force saw as the essential components of literacy programs that could meet these criteria; an analysis of the availability of appropriate literacy services; and recommendations on ways the city can begin to meet the problem within existing fiscal and institutional contraints. Recommended are: (1) the development of 10 in-school reading academies, each capable of enrolling 200 students; (2) the development of 6 pilot employment training centers in which literacy and employment skills are taught in an integrated manner; (3) the expansion of supplemental or part-time evening programs such as adult education centers to enable them to incorporate an additional 1,000 18-21 year olds; and (4) the establishment of a technical assistance corporation to provide a range of support services to the three program prototypes indicated above as well as to many smaller-scale literacy programs run by community-based agencies throughout the city. Listed in appendices are the membership of the Task Force, programs visited by the Task Force, and the methodology used for computing the number of illiterate 14-21 year olds in New York City. (CMG)

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LITERACY AND NEW YORK CITY'S HIGH SCHOOL AGED YOUTH

Final Report of The Youth Literacy Task Force

Submitted January 20, 1982

Co-Chairpersons:

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The Task Force was established and this report was requested by the High School Division of The New York City Public Schools.

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Youth Literacy Task Force, a joint effort of the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Policy and the Board of Education's High School Advisory Committee. The report first outlines the dimensions of the problem of illiteracy among high school aged youngsters. It then recommends a comprehensive program for addressing the problem on a city-wide basis within existing fiscal and institutional constraints.

The report's important findings are:

1) Approximately 60,000 of New York's 778,100 14-21 year olds are functionally illiterate.* 19,000 of these youngsters attend high school and the other 41,000 have dropped out of school.

2) Illiteracy is highly correlated with dropping out of school, juvenile delinquency, unemployment, and welfare dependency.

3) 80% of the youthful illiterate population can learn to read within 18 months--soon enough to join their age-mates at school, at work, or even in post-secondary education. Examples of successful literacy programs currently exist in N.Y.C. public schools, in adult education centers and in social service agencies for court referred youngsters.

4) Effective literacy services are in short supply. Most remedial programs serve those whose reading skills are only a few years below grade level. Those who score below the fifth grade level

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* Throughout the report, the terms functionally illiterate and non-literate refer to readers who score at or below the fifth grade level on standardized tests.

on standardized tests are excluded from nearly all CETA and private sector employment training programs and from most alternative education programs because of their lack of reading skills. Effective literacy programs have long waiting lists.

5) A look at successful programs indicates they can be replicated on a large scale within existing fiscal and institutional constraints. Their per-capita expenditure does not exceed that made on many high school students. Their success is attributable to a set of program and management characterstics which include: an immersion approach; high expectations; a specialized curriculum; a well developed system of instructional management; a flexible staffing pattern; strong linkages with social services; and integration with employment training services.

The Task Force recommends that the city take immediate steps to radically increase its capacity to provide intensive literacy training to its 14-21 year old youth. It suggests this effort be directed at the four program areas briefly outlined below:

1) <u>The development of ten in-school reading academies each capable of enrolling 200 students</u>. These academies should be designed for the 14-16 year old population who are full time students and who--after twelve to 18 months of literacy immersion--can rejoin their peers in high school programs. The Task Force recommends that each academy be jointly sponsored by an academic high school and a division of CUNY, which will provide student tutors and which will also assist in materials development, testing and evaluation, and staff training.

   The Task Force recommends funding the academies by enriching the standard allocation made to high school students with the resource room services of the Division of Special Education

based on an eligibility rate of 40% of each academy's enrollment.

2) <u>The development of six pilot employment training centers in which literacy and employment skills are taught in an integrated manner</u>. Each center would enroll 100 16-21 year old non-literate drop-outs. Termination goals for these programs would be unsubsidized employment and the acquisition of a sixth grade reading level (which the Task Force regards as sufficient for enrollment in G.E.D. preparation—this population being too old for enrollment in regular high school programs). The Task Force suggests that these centers be sponsored by the Board of Education's Office of Career Education. Two of the programs should be co-sponsored by Department of Employment training contractors, two by private employers and two by city agencies who contract out for services such as the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). In each case, the co-sponsor would supply stipended job slots, assistance in job supervision, and in job-specific curriculum development as well as provide post-program employment opportunities. Co-sponsorship by the private sector should be facilitated and partially subsidized by the Private Industry Council, an arm of the Department of Employment. Co-sponsorship by DOE would require that agency to combine all of its non-literate youth in the model programs. Participation by city agencies could be managed within existing personnel and recruitment budgets as evidenced by an HPD contract currently being finalized. The Task Force estimates that the centers can be funded by redeploying existing public funds.

3) <u>The expansion of supplemental or part-time evening programs such as adult education centers to enable them to incorporate an additional 1,000 18-21 year olds</u>. These programs are designed for the non-literate who is already employed. Funding should be borne by the Adult Basic Education program by means

of an enriched state funding formula. (N.Y. State is 33rd of the nation's 50 states in its per capita expenditure on adult basic education.)

4) The establishment of a technical assistance corporation which can provide a range of support services to the three program prototypes outlined above as well as the many smaller scale literacy programs run by community based agencies throughout the city. The corporation would maintain an information and analysis center and a training capability. It would direct private funds to literacy services and in addition, it would facilitate the interagency agreements needed for effective literacy programming. The Task Force recommends that the corporation be supported by research and development grants from foundations and corporations as well as from the public sector.

The Task Force considers such a focused initiative on illiterate youngsters to be a logical outgrowth of the Chancellor's and the Mayor's policies. It targets a special group of youngsters in educational trouble and it does so by redeploying and pooling existing resources.

LITERACY AND NEW YORK CITY'S HIGH SCHOOL AGED YOUTH

I. INTRODUCTION

This brief report presents the findings and recommendations of the Literacy for Youth Task Force, a joint effort of the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Policy and the New York City Board of Education's High School Advisory Committee. It describes the scope of and recommends solutions to the problem presented to New York City by the fact that 60,000 of its high school aged population--youth between the ages of 14 and 21--are functionally illiterate.[1] That is, they score below the fifth grade level on standardized reading tests, they cannot effectively comprehend a job application, the instructions on a medicine container, or a news story in a daily paper. By law, they are entitled to attend school. Yet they cannot comprehend the written materials of a high school course of study.

Illiteracy is highly correlated with criminal behavior[2], with unemployment[3], and with the receipt of public assistance.[4] The existence of 60,000 illiterate youngsters, while only 8% of the city's population of 14-21 year olds, constitutes a form of social dynamite whose costs --both in quality of life and in municipal dollars--can mortgage the city's future.

This report was requested in February 1981 by the Board of Education's High School Division. The Division had just completed eighteen months of intensive work to turn around the 45% drop-out rate documented in "The Dropout Report" issued in October 1979. During this period, the inability to read above a fifth grade level was identified as a major reason students leave school. It also surfaced as the problem for which effective services within the High School Division were least available. 40% of the 6,000 dropouts who returned to the Board's new outreach centers were found to read below the fifth grade level. The outreach centers could not successfully adapt their remedial services

to meet the literacy needs of these youngsters.* They also found that reading level eligibility requirements kept these youngsters out of nearly all of the educational and employment training programs designed for school drop-outs.

At the same time, the city's private and public youth employment, child care, and juvenile justice agencies cited the illiteracy of their clients as a major barrier to the effectiveness of their training and rehabilitation programs. The degree to which illiteracy undermined the efforts of the entire range of municipal youth agencies to perform came into focus. The High School Division asked The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Policy, which had been researching the problem as it affected city agencies, to join forces with its advisory committee. A task force was formed of 19 educators and administrators of both private and public sector youth programs.** It was asked to address the fundamental question: HOW WITHIN EXISTING FISCAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS, CAN THE CITY OF NEW YORK MOST EFFECTIVELY SERVE ITS FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE HIGH SCHOOL AGED POPULATION?

The report that follows includes: 1) a brief description of the activities of the Task Force; 2) an estimate of the number of non-literate teenagers there are in New York City; 3) a description of what the Task Force decided were appropriate and feasible effectiveness criteria for literacy programs for 14-21 year olds; 4) a list of what the Task Force saw as the essential components of literacy programs that could meet these criteria; 5) an analysis of the availability of appropriate literacy services; and 6) a set of recommendations for how the city can begin to meet the problem within existing fiscal and institutional constraints.

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*see December 11, 1980 fact finding report by The Project Outreach Operations Committee.

**see appendix #1 for names and affiliations of members.

II. TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES

Information for the report came from three types of sources, in addition to the expertise of Task Force members.

Interviews:

Extensive interviews conducted with staff members from the Division of High Schools and the Office of Career and Occupational Education of the Board of Education, the State Education Department's Division of Continuing Education, the N.Y.C. Department of Employment, and the N.Y.C. Department of Probation.

Test Results:

Test results published by the N.Y.C. Board of Education and by the State Education Department as well as survey data compiled by various national and state studies of school achievement and adult literacy.

Program Survey:

An informal city-wide survey conducted to identify effective literacy programs sponsored either by the High School Division, by a social service agency or by an adult education agency. Task Force members visited 16 of the recommended programs. (Appendix #2 contains the list of programs visited.) Visits to each program were at least one half day in length. They included observations of actual instruction, interviews with staff and students, and the collection of whatever quantitative or qualitative performance and monitoring data were available.

Task Force members exchanged written reports on program visits and met on five occasions to discuss the implications of their findings, the content of their recommendations, and drafts of the report.

III. HOW MANY NON-LITERATE 14-21 YEAR OLDS ARE THERE IN NEW YORK CITY?

The Task Force estimates that there are 60,000 high school aged

youth (14-21 years old) in New York City who are reading at or below the fifth grade level. Approximately 19,000, or one third, of these youngsters are enrolled in high school. This estimate is based on two sources of information: 1) the results of the 1980 city-wide administration of the New York High School Reading Test to high school students, and 2) a compilation of test results obtained from a range of programs serving out-of-school youngsters.

The methodology for arriving at both the in-school and the out-of-school estimates appears in Appendix #3. It should be noted here that we consider the out-of-school estimate to be extremely conservative. This is because the computations are based on data idiosyncratically collected by a variety of programs and is susceptible to error. In cases of uncertainty, the Task Force chose to deflate rather than inflate numbers of non-literate reported.

IV. EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA FOR LITERACY PROGRAMS

The teaching of reading to young people goes on all over the city, in kitchens, in churches, and in community organizations as well as in classrooms. It varies widely in quality and the Task Force considered it important to select criteria of effectiveness that were both appropriate to the needs of the population and feasible to apply on a wide scale.

APPROPRIATENESS:

The Task Force decided that an effective literacy program for non-literate youth is one that moves 80% of a non-literate intake population to a sixth grade achievement level within 18 months.

The sixth grade level of competency represents an important threshold. It is at this point that a young person becomes eligible for a range of remedial and alternative programs within the school system and for employment training programs in the community based and private sectors. He or she has escaped restriction to the dead end job market and has

attained the literacy requirements for basic survival in an urban setting. If not in school, the young person at least has a decoding base on which additional reading skills can be self taught.

The 18 month time limit reflects the reality of time available to an age group that must be self supporting in two to three years in a society in which literacy is a necessity. The pressure is obviously more severe for the non-reader than for the fourth or fifth grade level reader who may attain literacy in a shorter period of time. To attain a sixth grade level in 18 months, an absolute non-reader must gain four months for every month of instruction; a year for each three months; six years for each 18 months.

FEASIBILITY:

Our visits led us to believe that it would be feasible to apply these effectiveness criteria to a city-wide initiative despite the fact that none of the programs we discussed could, strictly speaking, be definitively documented as meeting the 80% literate - within - 18 months standard. We drew this conclusion because several programs regularly attained the required rate of gain with the target population. In many cases, funding cycles and specific program mandates--such as job placement--prevented the retention of clients for the full 18 months. The Task Force saw no reason why the rates of gain could not have been maintained had the programs been structured and funded to allow students an 18 month enrollment period.

More importantly, the successes and near successes we saw were attained within feasible funding allocations: that is--the per capita expenditures to which the youngsters in question are entitled by education law--albeit supplemented by the training or rehabilitation programs that have, during the last decade, been available to unemployed youngsters or those with drug problems or criminal justice involvement. Nor did the program successes we saw depend on superhuman outputs of energy or ingenuity. Rather, their productivity seemed to derive from combining or juxtaposing the set of well known components described below.

In sum, the Task Force felt that since the requisite rates of gain were observably attained for students at all starting points, in programs that often had diffuse mandates and that lacked any coherent institutional support, it would be reasonable to expect that within a structured and focused program, the effectiveness criteria detailed above would indeed be feasible ones to apply to a city-wide implementation effort. In fact, one of the conclusions drawn by the Task Force after its visits was that a major factor in the failure of many literacy programs, both in and out of school, was the failure of most program operators to realize that such rates of achievement are possible and can be set as a performance standard.

V. MODEL PROGRAMS AND THEIR ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS

All of the 16 programs the Task Force visited serve non-literates. They vary widely, however, in size, source of clients, age and background of clients, sponsorship, sources of funding, instructional methods and range of services. Five are in academic high schools, one is in an alternative school, one is in a G.E.D. training center, one is in a community college and one is in a prison. The seven others are in community based social service agencies. Some programs are full time and some are part-time. Some provide literacy instruction only , while others provide a full complement of social services. Several serve only ex-offenders, others serve any non-literate on a first come first served basis. Some use a curriculum based on functional or job related tasks, while others rely on traditional phonics materials. Some use volunteer tutors who work with clients in one-on-one sessions, while others use licensed teachers and group instruction.

MODEL PROGRAMS:

The three programs that came closest to fully meeting our effectiveness and feasibility criteria were: 1) The STAR program at High School Redirection, one of the Board of Education's eleven alternative high schools,

2) the Basic Skills Improvement Program, an adult education program funded largely by the State at New York City Technical College; and 3) the Court Employment Project, a community based organization providing counseling and employment training services to ex-offenders.

Other programs contained excellent features that the Task Force felt should be widely advertised and replicated--for example: the Fortune Society's use of one-on-one tutors--an arrangement infeasible for city-wide implementation; the instructional system at Jobs for Youth, whose rate of gain record is excellent but whose policy is to move clients into jobs within six months despite their literacy status; and Curtis High School's use of the staff and resources of the College of Staten Island.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

The Task Force tried to identify those qualities and features that seemed essential to the success of the effective literacy programs it observed. We looked for crosscutting variables--those components that effective programs of different types had in common and without which success for any program did not seem possible. The list that follows serves as the Task Force's recommended program guidelines for the city-wide initiative it recommends in the final section of the report. We include the list here to provide a context against which the shortcomings of the majority of available programs can better be understood.

1) Immersion: In successful programs, literacy instruction was scheduled from a minimum of 12 hours per week to a maximum of 30, depending on the level and characteristics of the student. These levels of intensity seemed to be necessary to develop the momentum to achieve the necessary learning rate.

2) Goal Setting: The setting of ambitious learning goals that are clearly defined both behaviorally and in terms

of test performance was critical. The best programs involved students in the process of setting overall achievement goals and the schedule by which intermediate points are to be reached.

3) Curriculum: Eclectic, experimental, and functional are the key terms chosen by the Task Force to describe the effective curricula we saw.

The most effective programs seen by the Task Force drew materials from many sources and provided staff and students with alternatives and options for different learning needs and modes.

They emphasized "language experience" and "functional" approaches which require the use of students' own oral expression life experiences and job demands as the content of written learning materials.

At the same time, material in the effective programs was carefully ordered into learning sequences that represented specific levels of reading, writing, and speaking competence. It is the combining and balancing of varied and diverse materials and modes of teaching and learning into sensible sequences with an underlying coherence that seemed to be critical.

4) Record Keeping: A basic necessity for sound instructional management seemed to be a record keeping system that organized test results, classroom activities and progress, relevant counseling and employment training data, as well as attendance information in an integrated format easily comprehensible by both students and staff.

5) Grouping: Grouping students by ability appeared to facilitate lesson planning for teachers and reduce inhibitions among students. On the other hand, mixing older and younger students seemed to produce a more stable and businesslike learning setting.

6) Class Size: The optimum size seemed to be an instructional group of 10-20 students with the flexibility to provide individual tutoring or small group instruction on a supplemental basis. The Task Force observed that peer interaction clarified instructional tasks and a social setting allowed the development of expressive and communication skills essential to program goals. In addition, group spirit appeared to be critical to creating momentum and enhancing confidence and self-esteem.

7) Staffing: Successful programs were staffed by groups of at least 4 persons who shared the responsibilities of testing, record keeping, materials development and teaching as well as maintaining contacts with social and employment services. Effective literacy teaching did not seem to depend on formal training, but rather on a resourceful and experimental approach to the devising of specialized materials and techniques. Staff cooperation seemed to be an ingredient critical to this process.

8) Linkage with social services: Most non-literate teenagers have social service needs that interfere with their acquisition of reading skills. Effective literacy programs had some mechanism to ensure access by their clients to social services such as counseling, child care and health care.

9) Linkage with employment services: Most non-literate teen-

agers need not only stipends but employment training as well. Successful programs integrated literacy training with skills training which was connected to particular career ladders, as well as concurrent stipended work.

VI. AVAILABILITY OF EFFECTIVE LITERACY SERVICES

The Task Force looked at the availability of literacy training within: 1) the school system; 2) employment training programs; 3) programs run by social service agencies; and 4) adult education programs. In none of the four were there sufficient places to accomodate more than a fraction of the youth in need of literacy services. And each of the four tended to have its own set of service delivery problems. This section describes the availability patterns and the types of problems typical of the four types of programs.

PROGRAMS AVAILABLE WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM:

The High School Division spends approximately $27,586,453* of federal and state funds on remedial reading programs for 64,000 of its 293,000 enrolled students. Little of this outlay, however, is spent on the non-reader. Instead it goes to the high school student who is behind but who reads above the 1.5 grade level. While city-wide figures are not available for the approximately 36,000 students in state funded remedial classes, of the 30,000 high school students receiving Title I remediation in 1980-81, only 3,000 or 10% had entering scores of 5.1 or below.

Non-readers are as eligible as the less disabled readers for

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* $16,233,460 for Title I English skills remediation and $11,352,993 for P.S.E.N. English skills remediation.

funding; but they are no more eligible, nor do they constitute a special funding category. They are, therefore, vulnerable to the effects of educational triage--if there is discretion, those most likely to succeed will get the help. The city-wide tests show that there are just about enough high school students more than 2 years behind but who score above 5.1--63,154--to fill the 66,000 in-school remediation slots. Less than 3,000 slots are left for the 19,000 non-readers who attend school.

Remedial instruction in high schools is organized in two ways: 1) supplemental programs in which students receive one period a day of remedial instruction that is unrelated to their other five instructional periods--academic courses conducted on grade level; and 2) self-contained mini-schools in which 100-200 students are grouped together for their entire academic program. An additional program that provides remediation to discharged students is Auxiliary Services for High Schools (ASHS).

Supplemental Programs:

Both State and Federal regulations require remediation to supplement the regular school day rather than to supplant it. This has led to the dominance of the supplemental approach which is highly inappropriate to the needs of the non-reader. Not only do the non-readers get far less reading instruction than they need but they waste 4/5 of their instructional day attaining failing grades in classes with reading assignments they cannot perform. Another problem stems from the fact that those non-readers who do receive supplemental instruction are not grouped together in separate classes. Thus, those few who get a supplemental class do not receive the specialized teaching they need. Instead they are spread in two's and three's throughout remedial classes whose instructional focus is on readers with very different problems.

The slow rate of gain achieved by most supplemental programs corroborates their insuitability for the non-literate population. Centralized data is not kept for the state funded PSEN classes but is kept for Title I classes. There, the average rate of gain in the 1979-80 school year was 1.3 years for 10 months of instruction--a rate far too slow to meet the needs of the non-literate teenager.

The Task Force visited two supplemental programs, each designed specially for very low readers. The first one, at a Manhattan high school, was a textbook example of how the supplemental model, however well intentioned or well suited for other sort of reading problems, undermines the efforts of even a dedicated and skillful teacher of non-literates. Students made little progress and were severly demoralized by the demands made on them by their academic teachers who had no structured relationship with their reading teacher. The other supplemental program was the Curtis Skills Center referred to earlier. In addition to the exemplary curriculum, and the fact that its reading teachers were highly trained, the academic teachers whose classes the non-literates attended were also trained. The Task Force felt that if only the program had been able to provide instruction for more hours per day, its results would have been phenomenal. As it was, its rates of gain averaged 2.5 years per year of program participation.

Mini-School Programs:

Distinct from supplemental programs is the mini-school model and this, the Task Force concluded, is structurally far better suited to the needs of nonreaders. It allows literacy instruction to be integrated into the entire school day, making possible the necessary focus and intensity. In addition, without the distractions of other types of students with other needs, the teachers can fully concentrate on developing the special materials and instructional procedures these students need.

Of the four mini-school programs we visited, only the STAR Program at High School Redirection, one of the Board's eleven alternative high schools, fully met our effectiveness criteria. During the 1980-81 school year 109 students -- 40 of whom were diagnosed as learning disabled and all of whom entered with a test score of 6.5 or below, showed an average gain of two grade levels for each five months of participation. Non-readers were brought to a fourth grade level in six to eight months and fourth grade readers were brought to a sixth grade level within a nine month year. Retention in the STAR program itself was 70% but most of those who left it did so in order to enter the regular high school program conducted at Redirection.

The staff includes: three regular high school teachers; two resource room teachers; four paraprofessionals; and a coordinator. All staff work as an integrated team.

There are no guidance counselors on the theory that in the intimate kind of teaching STAR provides, guidance is better provided by the teaching staff. Each teacher spends one full period a day counseling and in addition telephones the homes of absent students. Nursery services are available at the school for student-mothers. There is also a job developer on staff paid for by CETA and 65% of the students are placed in stipended after school employment training positions also funded by CETA.

STAR students get a ratio no richer or more expensive than provided many vocational students or to academic high school students who are enrolled in the part-time resource room program. Its unique feature

is the manner in which it integrates guidance, academic, and special education services into a coherent program. The Task Force found this integration so well suited to the needs of an intensive literacy program that it was surprised to find it nowhere else.

Other critical ingredients of STAR's success are the attitude and working methods of its staff - ingredients that are difficult to mandate but instead, must be identified and nurtured by effective leadership.

The staff is in constant collaboration both on the progress of individual students and on the development of materials and techniques. Reading diagnosis is elaborate and personalized. Results are explained to students as are the results of the frequent monitorings of student progress. Teachers can explain to observers exactly how and why each student has been matched with instructional approaches and materials.

Instructional materials are varied and make extensive use of both the 'language experience' and 'functional literacy' approaches. High school courses such as economics are adapted. Instruction is delivered in several formats -- one-to-one, large group, and small group.

The intellectual engagement of staff in the puzzle of why each "Johnny" can't read is intense, as is their emotional engagement with the process. Systematic record keeping is integrated with an ongoing trial and error approach to the development of new and better materials.

In sum - STAR is a vivid demonstration of the success that can result in schools when priorities are set, when leadership is exerted, when expectations are high, and when staffing is appropriately differentiated and organized.

The High School Division estimates that in the city's 110 high schools there are at least 23 mini-schools organized to serve low achievers. The Task Force selected for visitation four programs reputed to be relevant to its purposes and discussed others in interviews. While our survey was far from comprehensive we neither heard nor saw other successess like STAR and we tried to identify the factors that kept other programs from attaining the reading gains that STAR achieved.

We were interested to note that in the other mini-schools, the most egregiously missing of our nine "essential elements" were those concerned with curriculum and teaching. Most staff seemed almost completely unaware of the rates of gain possible for non-literates, of the currently observable specialized materials, or of the instructional management techniques devised by successful programs. We noted that progress was often charted only in terms of city-wide tests.

Even more interesting to us was the fact that teachers in programs with many poor readers typically analyzed their students' reading problems in terms of social or mental health and not in terms of reading disability. The logical and typical result was that for these teachers, appropriate interventions for their students were social rather than pedagogical.

Another problem we noted among teaching staff was that they rarely had a professional identification with the task of teaching non-literates. In most cases, they considered themselves misplaced high school teachers being asked to do a mixture of the jobs of special education teachers and elementary school teachers, neither of which reflected their training. They often saw their placement as temporary.

Without performance expectations in the form of reading gains, without the identification and promulgation of specialized job functions and program guidelines and with the expectation of short term placements there are few incentives for staff to develop a special body of expertise or a sense of ongoing mission.

Auxiliary Services for High Schools:

A third program run by the Board of Education for underachievers is Auxiliary Services for High Schools which, though sponsored by the Board, can, by education law, serve only those youngsters who have formally been discharged from school. In 1980-81, ASHS provided educational training geared to passing the General Educational Diploma test to 15,000 dropouts, approximately 8,000 of whom are 16-21, and 1,669 of them passed. (The test requires a minimum of a tenth grade reading ability.) Director Weissman estimates that about 5,000 of his last year students entered with reading levels between the third and fifth grade but his GED success rates were not broken out by intake reading level so it was not possible to determine if any of the non-literates were among those who passed. While the ASHS Center suggested to the Task Force as the most helpful to nonreaders had only 10% of its population in this category and could provide no data on their rates of gain, Dr. Weissman estimates that approximately 30% of the total ASHS population are functionally illiterate.

It seemed to the Task Force that the ASHS program, despite its strong commitment to troubled and disaffected youth, is not structured to give non-readers the focus they need.

Summary:

To summarize, there is now little reason for non-reading youngsters who wish to attain literacy to stay in school. The resources to which they are entitled are either spent on less disabled students or they are spent on programs not appropriate to a non-literate's needs. At the school level, the population tends to be seen in terms of social not educational pathology and as best treatable with guidance and employment training rather than with pedagogical strategies. High School Redirection and the Curtis Skills program demonstrate that the resources are in the system to do the job. But those resources are now simply not being targeted and deployed on a scale commensurate with the problem.

PROGRAMS AVAILABLE OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL SYSTEM:

The large scale providers of reading instruction to out of school youth are: 1) CETA funded employment contractors; 2) social rehabilitation programs -- such as drug treatment centers, prisons, and programs for ex-offenders; and 3) adult education classes. Task Force members visited nine such programs and talked extensively with centrally based policy-makers from funding agencies. While we saw several examples of exemplary literacy services, we concluded that the story for out of school non-literates is much the same as it is for those who are in school. They get the leavings of monies and programs whose primary targets are other populations and other problems.

Employment Training Programs: CETA legislation recognizes that reading and writing are critical to employability and have built reading instruction -- between 10 and 20 hours per week -- into most of their training programs. However, despite the large number of non-literate youth, their

manifest unemployability, and their desperate need for reading instruction that is linked to employment training, the majority of CETA contractors require a sixth grade reading level for their programs. We estimate that of the 8500 youth served in 1979-80, only 800 were non-literate as we define it.

There are two reasons why contractors tend to screen out low readers, both connected to a belief that employability requires literacy. The first is the limited time any one individual is allowed by program regulation to remain in the training. For most, it is either six months or twelve months and only in some cases is it eighteen months. Thus even when good reading gains are achieved, in most cases the training cycle ends before literacy -- as we have defined it -- is achieved. The second reason is the termination requirements to which CETA contractors are held. For a contractor to be refunded, 60% of its participants must be placed in unsubsidized employment at the end of a training cycle. The perception of most contractors is that poor reading skill is the greatest of the barriers to placement and the one they can do least about. Their recruitment and eligibility procedures reflect this.

As a result, the education component of most CETA training programs is geared at passing the GED exams. This exam requires tenth grade reading skills and instruction in such classes is not appropriate or useful to non-literates.

The great promise the CETA program structure holds for non-literate youth has not, as far as we could tell, been capitalized on. This is the opportunity it provides to integrate literacy training with employment training and thereby perform the two training tasks more efficiently

The integration we envisage replaces the usual model of ABC's in the morning and spark plugs in the afternoon. Instead, the morning's reading skills are taught with the vocabulary and sentences of the afternoon's car mechanics; the car mechanics are taught with extensive use of the written materials of car mechanics, materials which are adapted to reinforce the morning's reading skills. And they are each taught by staff who work for the same employer and with the same youngsters.

None of the employment training we saw developed the full potential of this model. Interestingly, however, those whose proportion of non-literates were above 30% were in the forefront of all reading programs city-wide in teaching literacy with vocational and functional orientations, in maintaining high quality instructional management systems, and in attaining rapid rates of gain. For example, Jobs for Youth and Vocational Foundation Inc. both reported rates of gain with their low readers of between one and four years for every 40 hours of instruction. However, rarely could they move their clients reading below the third grade level to literacy because of the short duration of the training cycles.

It should be pointed out that the 15% limit that DOE has set for the inclusion of non-literates in next year's contracts is far lower than what we speculated the proportion of unemployed CETA-eligible non-literate youths to be. While the Task Force is sympathetic with the reasons DOE is limiting the number of non-literate trainees in its program, we are of the opinion that if the non-literate youngsters to be served by DOE were grouped together rather than scattered through 73 different contracts and an integrated program were designed for them in which their educational entitlements were properly combined with D.O.E.'s employment training, then these youngsters could become both literate and employed for the same per-capita expenditure DOE makes on its literate clients.

Programs in Social Service Agencies:

Because programs for ex-offenders, ex-addicts and youngsters at risk of being placed in foster care are the only ones not able to impose admissions criteria of any kind, they are the only programs which do not exclude non-readers. This undoubtedly contributes to the considerable expertise on literacy training the Task Force discovered among these programs.

There are several ways in which the structure of social service programs makes them particularly well suited to providing literacy services to the target population. These programs tend to be multi-service and thereby they more thoroughly pervade the lives of their clients. For the most part, curricula are not regulated by State Education Department regulations and staffing is not regulated by credentialling requirements. Staff tend to be closer in background and experience to the clients they serve than is the case in strictly educational programs where staff are exclusively teachers. Without the weight of the traditional educational mandates of diploma granting institutions, there are fewer barriers to their being educationally experimental and eclectic.

Two programs for ex-offenders, the Court Employment Project (CEP) and the Fortune Society, provided extremely effective literacy services. Because Fortune functions on a one-on-one tutorial basis -- albeit with volunteer tutors, the Task Force decided it did not fit our feasibility criteria. The Court Employment Project, however, is one of the Task Force's three model programs.

In 1980-81, CEP provided educational services to 409 clients, 80% of whom were court referred individuals. 95% were under 21 and 40% entered with reading levels of 5.1 or below. In six month cycles, the

clients reading below 5.1 received intensive reading instruction for an average of 17 hours per week, counseling for one to four hours, and stipended on-the-job construction skills training for 17 hours each week. Three days of unexcused absence warranted expulsion, but after an initial 2 week orientation period, retention was 80 percent for each 6 month cycle. Average rates of gain were 2 grade levels per 6 month cycle.

CEP's education service is a fine example of a home grown, eclectic, and integrated program. Record keeping is thorough, student participation in task setting and materials selection is high, and staff interactions with the counseling and skills training staff are many. Staff backgrounds are varied. All teachers are trained and experienced though only two have N.Y.C. licenses.

Despite the successes of CEP, Fortune, Jobs for Youth and others, the Task Force has received many inquiries from social service agencies desperate to find literacy services for their clients. In our informal survey of the field, we received the impression that, in the main, these agencies did not feel themselves either mandated or funded to provide the quality or amount of literacy services their clients needed. In addition, many considered the teaching of reading to be exclusively the province of professionals and simply beyond their capacity to perform with the requisite skill.

In summary, the Task Force concluded that these programs provide excellent models for the delivery of literacy services that, at the present time, are largely undeveloped.

Adult Education Programs:

State and federal adult education monies are another source of funding for basic literacy training for 16-21 year olds who have dropped out of school. The largest of these programs and the only one likely to survive current federal cuts is Adult Basic Education (ABE) a program run by the State Education Department (SED) which, in 1981-82, funded 44,799 adult education participants in the city at a cost of $5.2 million. Grants were allocated through a competive application system, awarded by SED to public and private colleges (9%), the Board of Education (79%), and community based programs (12%).

The program is open to the city's entire adult population which includes an estimated half million illiterates. Its program offerings include employability skills and English as a second language as well as reading and math at levels 0-8. Participants receive between 6-15 hours of instruction per week.

The non-literate youngster does not come out very well in the intense competition for these services.

A breakdown of the 38,560 participants in the Board of Education's program (79% of the city's total) shows that 26,221 were in ESL programs, 1,928 were in employability programs, 6,170 read above the fifth grade level and, of the remaining 4,241, only 679 were under 21 years old.

Some examples of waiting lists further indicate the relationship between supply and demand. For the 32 sites that serve readers between the third and fourth grades the active wait list is 3,000. Literacy

Volunteers of New York City Inc., which engages in no advertising for students, has a twelve month wait list and the adult reading center in N.Y.C technical college described below has a three month wait list for its day program and one that is over a year for the evening program. It should be noted here that New York State has traditionally funded basic education for adults at an extraordinarily low level. It is 33rd out of the 50 states in its per capita allocation. While the average state per capita allocation is $6.55, New York's is .72¢ despite an adult functional illiteracy rate that placed New York State 16th in the nation.

The Task Force observed two Adult Education Programs and found one of them, the Basic Skills Improvement Program at New York City Technical College, one of its most useful models.

The program serves 300 students between 0-8 reading levels and is located within the College's Adult Learning Center. Students are homogeneously grouped into classes that meet either six or ten hours a week. The average gain is 1.5 years for each 80 hours.

The program contained nearly all of the essential elements specified earlier except direct linkage with employment and social services. The program's curriculum was a model of how to be student centered and structured; how to be eclectic, functional and vocational as well as coherent. Teachers demonstrated how to draw a fine line between being personally involved with their students and at the same time retaining reading as the 'class' focus.

The program mandate of ABE lends itself better than that of either the high school or of CETA to the needs of the non-literate. It is not surprising, therefore, that the curricula and staff of the ABE providers we saw tended to be more appropriate than those of schools or social service agencies. In addition, the ABE centers demonstrated to the Task Force the benefits of mixing adults and young people for literacy instruction.

ABE resources are insufficient for the literacy needs of New York's adults and the Task Force does not recommend siphoning resources away from this critical need. What we do recommend is that the city take advantage of the leadership and expertise developed within ABE to develop jointly sponsored and staffed programs attended by both youth and adults.

The staff also demonstrated to the Task Force the value of involvement with the profession. The program's leaders are also leaders in the field. They publish articles, organize conferences, and provide forums for the development and dissemination of basic literacy techniques, not only among their own staff but throughout the city. The leadership role demonstrated at the N.Y.C. Technical College program, the Task Force decided, would be a critical factor in the development of a city-wide program.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our investigation has led the Task Force to believe that by re-deploying existing publicly funded resources and integrating them with private sector capacities the city can mount a comprehensive and effective youth literacy program. We project that 4,000 new literacy training slots as well as the capacity and direction for subsequent growth can be in place by December of 1982. We suggest that the initiative be developed within four program areas:

1) The development of 10 in-school reading academies each serving 200 14-16 year olds who, after 12 to 18 months of literacy immersion, can join their peers in a regular diploma granting program.

2) The development of 6 centers which integrate employment training and literacy, each to serve 100 16-21 year old school drop-outs. These centers should each be jointly sponsored by the Board of Education and either a) a private company, b) a CETA contractor or c) a city agency.

3) Expansion, through increased and retargeted state funding, of the part-time adult education centers to allow existing model programs to incorporate an additional 1,000 18-21 year old non-literates.

4) The establishment of a technical assistance corporation which can provide research, training, and other support services to the three program prototypes and to the many smaller scale literacy programs run by community based agencies throughout the city.

IN-SCHOOL PROGRAMS:

The in-school reading academies should each serve a cluster of high schools and should be distributed throughout the city on the basis of need and implementation capacity. Most students will be referred from junior high schools and the academies will serve as transitions to high school. Following are the Task Force's recommendations on program guidelines, sponsorship, staffing, accreditation and resource allocation.

Guidelines and Standards:

The Task Force is of the strong opinion that the first step in establishing the in-school program is the establishment of clear and specific program guidelines focused exclusively on the needs of non-literate youth. The nine essential elements spelled out on pp. 7-10 earlier in the report should be the basis of the guidelines. Each of the nine, however, needs to be worked out in terms of minimal standards and an acceptable range of alternative implementation methods. Curriculum and instructional management models must be identified and made available to participating schools. Incentives for principals to include a literacy center in their school must be provided (see section on funding below) as well as the performance standards the center must meet for it to receive continued support.

Sponsorship:

We recommend that each center be jointly sponsored by a high school and a geographically convenient branch of CUNY that has a track record in basic literacy, such as Brooklyn College or N.Y.C. Technical College.

CUNY's role would be to provide assistance in materials development, staff training and evaluation. It would also provide undergraduates as teaching assistants. Two model school-college relationships are: 1) The Staten Island Continuum and 2) LaGuardia Middle College.

A governing board of CUNY and Board of Education representatives should work out the city-wide guidelines and standards for the in-school literacy centers as well as facilitate the inter-institutional arrangements.

The Task Force suggests that one way to bring about a productive pairing of schools and colleges is for the governing board to engage in a kind of competitive request-for-proposal (RFP) process in which school-college combinations compete for the sponsorship of a literacy center.

Staffing:

The city must develop a cadre of literacy teachers and administrators whose professional identification is with the needs of the teenaged non-literate. It must also devise a method of achieving differentiated staffing patterns within the individual academies. To do this, job descriptions that reflect the needed skills and training must be formulated, a recruitment drive launched, and a method of instituting department status devised.

The Task Force concluded from its visits that effective literacy teachers for this population functioned somewhat differently from teachers who were effective in the traditional academic setting. They had a personalized style of teaching; they were skilled at on the on-the-spot development of instructional materials based on functional or real-life experiences and needs; they tended to perform diagnostic, guidance, and counseling functions. In addition, they were extremely collegial in their approach to

their teaching tasks and usually operated with a case conference or team-work approach to the developing of teaching materials and strategies. They tended to have backgrounds that emphasized manpower (employment) training, the learning disabled, the creative arts, or counseling, in addition to experience in teaching traditional academic subjects. We concluded that in a staff recruitment program, job descriptions and eligibility criteria should be defined so as to recognize those skills and background experiences. The resulting staff pool will include individuals with a variety of credentials.

The staffing pattern we suggest for the in-school reading academies is based on that of the STAR program discussed earlier (pp. 13-14). For 200 student slots, this would be:

- 4 teachers with backgrounds in high school reading programs, graphic and dramatic arts, adult education, or common branches teaching;
- 2 teachers with backgrounds in employment training;
- 4 teachers with backgrounds in teaching the learning disabled (this will require certifying as handicapped 80 of the 200 participants);
- 5 paraprofessionals with backgrounds in any of the above as well as counseling and record keeping;
- 1 school secretary;
- the part time services of a school based support team who will perform initial evaluations and ongoing diagnostic work;

- 1 coordinator with strong leadership, management, evaluation and case-management skills; and

- 10 volunteer tutors from CUNY.

Once recruited and trained, these individuals must be insulated from the interdepartmental transfers to which high school reading teachers are unusually vulnerable because of lack of department status. Perhaps status on the faculty to the participating branch of CUNY can be a means to provide the necessary protection.

Accreditation:

High school aged youngsters in need of twelve to 18 months of literacy training may need to spend more than four years getting a high school diploma. It is critical, however, that their literacy curriculum be designed to allow them to accumulate some academic credits while attending a reading academy.

Funding:

The High School Division allocates personnel to its schools on the basis of enrollment, the number of students reading two or more years below level, and to support special programs. Personnel are allocated in "units" not specific positions or dollars. A principal can use the units in whatever staffing pattern seems most appropriate. On the basis of average salary* staff lines are equated to units as follows:

* The average teacher's salary is $25,000 (without fringe). A unit can therefore be equated to $25,000.

teacher = 1 unit
principal = 1.8 units
guidance counselor = 1.14 units
school secretary = .63 units
school neighborhood worker = .48 units

In the fall of 1980, 73.27% of all high school units were instructional rather than administrative. The city-wide average ratio of students per unit is 19.4.

The staffing pattern recommended by the Task Force for each reading academy totals 10.5 high school units for 200 student slots which is equal to 19 students per unit.

6 teachers = 6 units
5 paraprofessionals = 2.5 units
1 school secretary = .6 units
1 coordinator (A.P. status) = 1.4 units

Total = 10.5 units for 200 students,
which equates to 19 students per unit.

It also assumes that at least 80 of each academy's participants are certifiably in need of special education's resource room services. The resource room program provides one teacher for each 20 eligible students in classroom groupings of no more than five students for each teacher. Students attend for one or two periods each day. The program supplements a student's regular academic program and is not included in computing a school's student/unit ratio.

The point the Task Force wishes to strongly emphasize is that its recommended student-personnel ratio of 19 students per unit BARELY EXCEEDS THE AVERAGE ALLOCATION MADE ON THE AVERAGE HIGH SCHOOL PUPIL -- 19.4 students per personnel unit. Many high school programs are far more expensive.

For example, the average vocational/technical school's unit allocation is 16.20 students/unit and the outreach program's ratio is 10.75 students per unit.

There will obviously be extra costs associated with starting a new program, particularly recruitment and training costs. There is ample precedent for the disposition of units for special purposes by high school superintendents and by the Division's director. An example is the current 'target school' program in which extra units are given to 12 high schools to develop special programming for dropout prone youngsters. The point is, the reading academies are affordable.

EMPLOYMENT/LITERACY CENTERS:

The Task Force recommends the development of six pilot employment/literacy centers each to serve 100 16-21 year old non-literate school dropouts. This population is too old to both learn to read and accumulate 38 high school credits. We consider it unrealistic to expect them to join a diploma granting program. The program goals for these students are unsubsidized employment and a sixth grade reading level which they will attain simultaneously through a curriculum and an instructional system that integrates literacy teaching and job skills training. Our suggestions on program guidelines, sponsorship, staffing and funding for the employment/literacy centers follow.

Sponsorship:

Each center should be sponsored by the Board of Education's Office of Career Education. This office is responsible for the long range planning of vocational education, for monitoring the city's manpower needs and for operating the Board's Adult Basic Education programs. In our view, this division is the best equipped to put together this component of the city-wide literacy program. Because the program requires 1) a job related literacy curriculum, 2) on-the-job experience, and 3) stipends, the Task Force suggests three types of co-sponsors: Department of Employment contractors, city agencies who contract out work, and private companies. While the three types of co-sponsors will operate differently, all of them will provide stipends, assistance in curriculum development, job supervision, and job placement at the end of the program. Each type of co-sponsorship raises issues on which the Task Force has recommendations.

DOE has sustained severe cuts and in 1982 will serve 4,408 out of school youngsters, 46% of the youth it served in 1981. It is under pressure to reduce the cost of each training slot by reducing the length of the training cycle and by shedding certain of the services it has customarily performed, particularly education. We recommend that DOE: 1) reserve 15% of its slots for non-literate youth; 2) that it stipulate that all of these youth enroll with contractors who are co-sponsoring employment/literacy centers with the Board of Education; 3) that it extend the allowable cycle for any single individual to 18 months, and 4) that, for this population, it fund stipends, job supervisors, and placement personnel only.

We estimate that if DOE follows these policies, it will be able to serve what they consider to be a costly population for the same funding outlay they spend on their least costly population.

In 1980-81, the annual cost for each participant in the Youth Employment Program (the DOE program best suited to our target population) broke out as follows:

4,875	stipends (without fringe)
950	educational services
950	other support services
$6,775	total

If the Board of Education funds educational and counseling services (75% of the costs that are not stipends), DOE will save $1,425 per year for each YEP participant. If DOE reduces the stipended portion of the program to 70% from 100%, then another $1,463 per participant would be saved for a total of $2,888 saved per participant year. This would allow DOE to either: 1) extend the cycles of the extremely low readers who need more than 12 months of training, or 2) increase the number of participants by 35%.

The Task Force recommends the city agency co-sponsorhip model on the basis of two programs. The first is an existing contract between the Water Registry and the Federation of Employment Guidance Services (FEGS) in which the city contracts with FEGS to supply trained labor to transcribe forms on a piecework basis. The contract pays FEGS to recruit, train and provide support services to unemployed handicapped people. It also funds minimum wage payments for the work they perform. Many of the handicapped participants have subsequently become employed on a full time basis. The second is a contract that is currently being finalized between the Department of

Housing and Preservation (HPD) and the Court Employment Project (CEP) to provide rehabilitation services in city buildings. The contract will fund CEP to train, support and supervise the ex-offender population with which it deals so they can perform construction work for which they will receive minimum wage stipends.

The Task Force does not see institutional barriers to the expansion of this model into other city agencies. It suggests that selected agencies make a formal commitment to this type of participation in employment training as well as to assisting with job-specific curriculum development and the guarantee of post-program job opportunities.

The private sector is engaged in many comparable programs with the public schools. As mentioned above, the Cooperative Education Program involving 13,200 youngsters citywide and the Citi-Bank program are two examples. However, the Task Force has met considerable resistance from the private sector to proposals for training and employing poor readers. We feel that this reluctance is based on stereotypical views regarding the inability of this population to learn to read as well as incorrect assessments of the literacy requirements of various tasks. Our recommendation is to persuade at least two companies to co-sponsor the centers on a pilot basis in order to overcome these fears.

Staffing:

The precise nature of these positions will have to be developed with the integrated curricula but the Task Force thinks that the centers' teaching staff will have to function quite differently from staff in the academies. They will have to be able to teach at work sites as well as in classrooms. And they will have to work cooperatively with the co-sponsor's

personnel both in the supervision of students and in curriculum development. The centers will require major curriculum development and dissemination efforts that are non-traditional for educators. A carefully targeted recruitment drive for personnel to perform this work will have to be conducted.

Evaluation and Training:

Because the employment training centers entail the piloting of new curricula, new interagency relationships and new staffing patterns, the Task Force suggests that this aspect of the program be thoroughly documented. The Task Force also recommends that time for staff training be set aside and funded.

Funding:

The centers will be more expensive per capita than the reading academies. Their program occupies more hours per day and is conducted on two sites which results in a less efficient use of staff. In addition, students will receive stipends for 70% of their program time. Transportation will also be funded.

We estimate their staffing pattern will have to be 40% richer than those of the reading academies. For 100 students we project:

5 teacher/work supervisors, (1 per 20 clients)
2 learning disabilities specialists
1 school secretary
2 paraprofessionals
1 bookkeeper
1 coordinator
1 curriculum developer/field supervisor

We recommend that the Board of Education negotiate with the State Education Department for full reimbursement for these students. The Co-op program and the Satellite Program provide precedents. We suggest that the Board support them as it would support vocational students who are also enrolled in the resource room program, 16.2 students per unit plus one special education teacher per twenty youngsters. Under this formula, the Board could provide 6.17 personnel units in addition to two learning disabilities teachers. A suggested breakdown of staff support between the co-sponsors is:

B.O.E.	Co-Sponsor
2 learning disabilities teachers	2 teacher/work supervisors
1 school secretary	1 curriculum developer/field supervisor
2 paraprofessionals	
1 coordinator	
3 teacher/work supervisors	

In addition, the co-sponsor should provide stipends and transportation which would if one year were the average length of stay for each student, be approximately $5,236 per student per year (11.5 months = 50 weeks x 40 hours per week = 2000 hours x 70% time stipended = 1,400 hours x $3.35 minimum wage= $4,690 plus $546 for daily transportation = $5,236).

These stipends do not exceed what DOE contractors allocate for 12 month Y.E.P. participants, nor do they exceed projected stipends in the above mentioned H.P.D. contract. To date, private companies who participate in the Co-op program have contributed up to $5,750 per student per year in stipends.

The Task Force recommends that the Private Industry Council, the CETA funded organization whose mandate is to develop and fund ways for private industry to participate in employment training, fund the start up, staff training, and O.T.P.S. as well as research and evaluation support for the programs in which private sector companies are co-sponsors.

ADULT EDUCATION CENTERS:

With an estimated annual per slot expenditure of $350, the Adult Education Programs are the least expensive of the three types of service we recommend.

The Task Force was impressed with the expertise it found within these programs and with the basic suitability of their structure to the older (18-21 year old) non-literate population who have employment and or family commitments for 6 to 8 hours per day and whose needs are more apt to be limited to literacy training. We recommend expanding the slots available to New York City's non-literates under 21 by 1,000 - to a total of 1,800.

We also recommend some modifications to the program described in the guidelines section below.

Guidelines:

Due to the discrepancy between the 1.5 years of gain per 80 hours of instruction obtained by the Basic Skills Center and the statewide average of one year of gain per 200 hours of instruction, the Task Force suggests

that rate-of-gain expectations are too low in most programs and that curriculum development and staff training are necessary. We are aware that the Board of Education, which coordinates over 8,000 ABE program slots, has recently initiated a major effort of this kind and we recommend that it receive ongoing support and that other providers throughout the city who are obtaining low rates of gain participate in its efforts.

Wait lists are far longer for evening programs than they are for day programs and we recommend that programs adjust their scheduling to better fit this demand pattern. Expansion of services should all be put into evening programming.

Instruction is currently scheduled from six to fifteen hours per week for day programs and six to ten hours per week for night programs. We recommend that, for non-literate clients, instruction be for a minimum of 12 hours per week. We also recommend that evening programs be restructured to be able to provide individual participants with up to fifteen hours a week.

Sponsorship:

The State Education Department (SED) is now favoring applications that demonstrate linkages with the providers of other services and the Task Force strongly endorses this policy. It considers the Door, located on Manhattan's Lower West Side, to be a model for the integration of education services into an agency that provides a constellation of legal, housing and medical services.

Funding:

SED has recently taken two steps to target existing resources to native speaking non-literates. First, in its selection of grant applications for funding, it has altered the relationship of Basic Skills to ESL programs from the previous 30%/70% to a more balanced 50%/50%. Second, also through its funding selections, it is increasing the proportion of clients who are native speakers reading at the fifth grade level or below from 10% of its total client population to 25%. Together these steps should mean that within existing resources an additional 500 slots can be provided to our target population.

While our other program recommendations can be funded within existing resources, we recommend that an additional 500 adult education slots be funded from an expanded state appropriation of $175,000. The case for expanded state funding is particularly compelling in view of the fact that New York State is thirty-third of the fifty states in its per capita allocation to adult education. It spends $.72 on each participant and the average expenditure of all other States is $6.55 on each participant.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

It has struck the Task Force in its investigations that literacy training for youth is a specialized field distinct from the teaching of adults, and distinct from employment training. One of the reasons it has fallen through the cracks is that it uses personnel trained for other functions, teaching material designed for other tasks and evaluation methodologies created for other programs. It also, as most of this report has documented, depends on collaborations between agencies whose primary mandates are the delivery of services other than literacy. It claims no agency, no department -- not even a division -- for its own purposes. Nor does it

have categorical funds of its own but it depends on leftovers or diversions from funds appropriated for other purposes.

To overcome this stepchild status, the Task Force recommends the establishment of a technical assistance corporation devoted entirely to advancing the quality and expanding the quantity of literacy services to young people in New York City. We suggest that it have not-for-profit status so that it can receive government, business, and foundation grants. We suggest that it be independent, as opposed to part of an existing agency or department, so that it can better perform interagency coordination and so it can hire interdisciplinary personnel unconstrained by the job title restrictions of agencies.

We recommend that the corporation maintain a core staff of three to five professionals and that they be supported by contributions from those corporations, foundations, and public agencies directly involved in on-going programming.

The Task Force envisions five primary functions for the technical assistance corporation. Most are support services but we can also predict situations where it might be advisable for the corporation to actually operate services, at least on a short term basis.

1) Clearinghouse: The Corporation should be a clearinghouse for information on both the theoretical and practical aspects of youth literacy. It should maintain a library of relevant research and teaching materials and, for referral purposes, detailed descriptive material on existing

sources of literacy instruction throughout the city. In addition, it should maintain current information on relevant legislation and funding opportunities. It should also serve as a personnel clearinghouse for individuals with expertise in the field.

2) Training Capacity: The corporation should maintain a training capacity for both administrators and instructors. It should be able to provide a range of services, from one-day workshops to year-long in-service training. These services should be designed to assist existing service providers to improve or expand their literacy services as well as assist in the establishment of new services. The training should cover both instructional and management issues and should be available on a no-cost basis.

3) Interagency Coordination: The corporation should be able to facilitate inter-agency agreements necessary to implement the expansion the Task Force recommends. To do this, it must maintain credibility with the key personnel of the relevant agencies as well as a detailed working knowledge of each agency's policies, regulations and funding patterns. In addition, arrangements should be made to allow the deployment or loan of agency staff to the t.a. corporation without loss of seniority

or pension status. On the basis of current functions and funding patterns, the agencies most likely to be involved are: The Board of Education, CUNY, The Department of Employment, Special Services for Children, The Youth Board and the Community Development Agency.

4) Private Sector Involvement: The Task Force has received many inquiries from foundations and from corporations as to how they might best contribute to the expansion of literacy services for youth. The Task Force recommends that the t.a. corporation maintain a capacity to direct private sector funds and resources into components of literacy services for which it can guarantee performance standards and accountability.

5) Evaluation and Monitoring Functions: The corporation should provide evaluation and monitoring functions on a contract basis. It would provide both performance monitoring and program analysis services.

FOOTNOTES

1) Throughout the report we use the terms non-literate and functionally illiterate to refer to readers who score at or below the fifth grade level on standarized tests. The term encompasses levels of competence that range from a lack of letter recognition to the ability to read with comprehension selected phrases and sentences.

   We are well aware of the fallacies of the grade-level metric and the problems inherent in expressing competence in terms of test scores. We use the term 'grade level' throughout the report as an imprecise shorthand indicator of how well a person can read.

2) Recent studies indicate that as many as 85 percent of the youngsters who appear in family court are disabled readers and that 40 percent of the imprisoned adult population read at or below the 8th grade level. See, respectively, Kraraceus, W. "Reading Failure and Delinquency." Discipline in the Classroom, Washington, D.C. National Education Association, 1974 and Hunter, C. with Harman D. Adult Illiteracy in the United States. New York: McGraw Hill, 1979.

3) Data indicate that over one-third of the hard-core unemployed have completed four or fewer years of education. See: Special Labor Force Report No. 186. Washington, D.C. US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1976.

4) The proportion of persons with less than six grades of schooling who receive public assistance is twice that of those with 6 to 8 years of education. See: National Advisory Council on Adult Education. A Target Population in Adult Education. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974.

Appendix #1 i

MEMBERSHIP OF THE YOUTH LITERACY TASK FORCE

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Programs Visited by The Task Force

The programs visited by the Task Force are listed below in alphabetical order. The brief description that accompanies each listing is based on conditions that existed at the time of the visit (between May 1980 and June 1981) and may not reflect current program conditions.

Court Employment Program (CEP)
346 Broadway
New York, New York 10013

Contact Person: Maximo Blake
Telephone: 732-0076

Funded with CETA and Department of Labor grants, CEP provided 400 youth, 40% of whom were functionally illiterate, with education, counseling and employment training services. Participants gained between two and four grade levels in each six month cycle. Class size averaged eleven, curricula emphasized functional and language experience approaches and 25% of the program's teaching staff possessed N.Y.C. teaching licenses.

Curtis High School
Basic Skills Center
Hamilton Avenue and St. Marks Place
Staten Island, New York 10301

Contact Person: Robert Perrault
Telephone: 477-8825

The Basic Skills Center provides literacy instruction on a supplemental one period a day basis to 130 freshman and sophomores at Curtis High School. Class size varies with reading level and classes are staffed by Board of Education teachers and professors from the College of Staten Island. All staff are trained in the teaching methods and materials designed by Caleb Gattegno. The average rate of gain is 2.5 reading levels per year.

Appendix #2 ii

The Door: A Center of Alternatives
Learning Center
618 Avenue of Americas
New York, New York 10011

Contact Person: Suzanne Pedrick
Telephone: 691-6161

Embedded within a publicly funded, privately operated multi-service center for youth, aged 12 to 21, the Learning Center provides twice weekly 2 hour language arts classes to approximately 35 young people. Classes with 6 to 8 students are staffed by one teacher who has teaching experience but is not licensed. Approximately one third of the participants are functionally illiterate and their average length of stay is 4 months. Individualized phonics and language experience approaches are emphasized for the non-literate students.

Fortune Society
229 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10003

Contact Person: Melanie Johnston or Lynne Ornstein
Telephone: 677-4600

Fortune provides tutoring and employment training to 150 ex-offenders about half of whom are non-literate. The teaching staff consists of six professionals and a pool of volunteers who work with students on a one-on-one basis. The curricula is phonics oriented, the average length of stay is one year and the average rate of gain is two grade levels per year.

High School Redirection
STAR Program
226 Bristol Street
Brooklyn, New York 11212

Contact Person: Lynda Sarnoff
Telephone: 498-2605

High School Redirection is one of the Board of Education's eleven alternative schools and the STAR program enrolls students who read below the 6.5 grade level. During the 1980-81 school year (in September 1981 it moved to its present and larger location) the STAR program served 110 students in 3 large classrooms with two supplemental resource rooms. Teachers licensed to teach academic subjects were assisted by paraprofessional teaching aides and learning disabilities teachers supplied by the Division of Special Education. Teaching methods were eclectic, drawing mainly from the language experience and functional approaches. The average length of stay is one year, with many placed into the regular Redirection classes. Students progress at a rate of 2 to 4 grade levels per year.

James Monroe High School
1300 Boynton Avenue
Bronx, New York 10472

Contact Person: Sheila Stember
Telephone: 893-5800

The Title I Low Readers Program at James Monroe serves approximately 40 9th grade non-literate students for two periods each day. One licensed teacher and a paraprofessional teaching aid work with each of two 20 student classes. Sequenced and individualized reading materials are employed, along with diagnostic criterion referenced tests. The average daily attendance rate is 90% and students progress approximately one year for each year in the program.

Jobs for Youth
1831 2nd Avenue
New York, New York 10028

Contact Person: Pauline Periah
Telephone: 427-3420

Funded by a Basic Skills Improvement grant, Jobs for Youth serves approximately 70 16 to 21 year olds in its education program. Two-thirds of the participants are non-literate and they receive 6 to 12 hours of instruction each week. Students work on individualized assignments, broken down into 16 vocationally oriented competencies. The student teacher ratio is 1:4. The average length of stay is two months (most get placed in jobs) and the rate of gain averages two grade levels per 40 hours. The teachers are not licensed.

Literacy Volunteers of New York City
160 W. 78th Street
New York, New York 10024

Contact Person: Dianne Kangisser
Telephone: 873-4462

Literacy Volunteers is a not-for-profit corporation with a small professional staff and a large pool of volunteer tutors. Tutors undergo an intensive 18 hour training program and are assigned to one of several locations throughout 4 boroughs. The program serves approximately 800 non-literate adults, approximately 30 percent of whom are below 21. Most tutors meet their students twice weekly for 1 to 2 hour sessions. The methods of teaching are primarily language experience and phonics and the average length of stay is six months.

Appendix #2 v

Martin Luther King High School
122 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, New York 10023

Contact Person: Ed Blaine
Telephone: 874-1202

The minischool program for low readers at Martin Luther King High School serves 35 students who are assigned to classes of 8 to 10. Each class is staffed by a teacher and a paraprofessional teaching aid. A counselor and family assistant worker are assigned to the program 2 days each week. The curriculum is adapted to their reading level mainly with Title I materials.

New York City Technical College
Basic Skills Improvement Program
300 Jay Street CE503
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Contact Person: Bonnie August
Telephone: 643-2666

Supported by a Basic Skills Improvement grant, NYC Technical College serves approximately 275 adults, 70% of whom are non-literate and 25% of whom are below 21. Students in classes of 10 to 15 and staffed by one teacher receive six to ten hours of instruction per week and progress at a rate of 1.5 grade levels per 80 hours of participation. Teachers, some of whom are licensed and all of whom are experienced in teaching adult basic education, employ a range of teaching methods, including language experience and functional curricula.

Appendix # 2 vi

Queens Branch, Department of Probation
Departmental Reading Clinic
153-30 89th Street
Jamaica, Queens 11432

Contact Person: Mildred Miller
Telephone: 990-5655

Jointly funded by the Department of Probation and the Youth Board, the Reading Clinic serves approximately 85 middle and high school students who are two or more years behind in reading. Students come to the clinic for 1 or 2 hours each week, usually after their regular school day, and receive instruction either in small clusters of 2 to 5 students staffed by a non-licensed teacher or in a one-to-one session with a volunteer. Some students also attend one hour instructional groups of six to eight participants. Average rate of gain in this supplemental program is two grade levels per 35 weeks of participation.

Rikers Island School
P.S. 233 and P.S. 256
Hazen Street, Rikers Island
East Elmhurst, New York 11370

Contact Person: Mrs. Rogers (PS 233) and Mr. Perlman (PS 256)
Telephone: 728-7000

These two Board of Education schools serve approximately 430 detained and sentenced adolescents in classes of six to fifteen students which are staffed by one Board of Education teacher. Approximately 60 percent of the students are functionally illiterate. Their average length of stay is two to four months and each attends class eight to fifteen hours per week. Title I materials are used and a functional or life skills approach is employed.

Appendix # 2 vii

Roberto Clemente School
432 Jackson Avenue
Bronx, New York 10461

Contact Person: Jerry Mahrer
Telephone: 292-7427

The Roberto Clemente School is an Auxiliary Services for High School (ASHS) program serving approximately 320 discharged youth, 10% of whom are functionally illiterate. One New York City licensed teacher and a paraprofessional teaching aide working in classes of 15 to 20 students, assign individualized workbook exercise to each student and provide assistance to students on an as-needed basis. The average length of stay for the students is one year.

South Shore High School
6565 Flatlands Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11236

Contact Person: Lawrence Feigenbaum
Telephone: 531-4454

The South Shore supplemental program serves approximately 400 11th and 12th graders who are two or more years behind in reading. Using individualized, sequenced materials, one teacher instructs classes of 15 students for one or two periods each day.

Appendix # 2 viii

Vocational Foundation, Inc.
Education Skills Department
44 East 23rd Street
New York, New York 10010

Contact Person: Deborah Douglass
Telephone: 777-0700

The Education Skills Department of VFI serves approximately 100 youth, about one quarter of whom read below the 6th grade level, in classes of eight to ten students for 16 hours each week. One teacher works with each class and tutoring by volunteers is available when needed. Students gain an average of 1½ grade levels over a 3 month period. Instruction is provided in English grammar, social studies and science as well as reading comprehension.

Wingate High School Minischool
600 Kingston Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11203

Contact Person: Brenda Spivey
Telephone: 467-7400

The minischool at Wingate serves 100 to 125 students, all of whom read below the 6th grade level. Each student is scheduled for 4 classes (reading, math, social studies and science). Individualized, sequenced materials are utilized in classes of 20 to 25 students staffed by one licensed teacher. Approximately 45% of the students showed no improvement in reading over the course of a semester, while the remainder progressed one-half to a full year.

Appendix #3 i

METHODOLOGY FOR COMPUTING THE NUMBER OF NON-LITERATE 14-21 YEAR OLDS IN NEW YORK CITY

In-school youth: Of the 293,000 youngsters enrolled in New York City High Schools, the Task Force estimates that 18,778 read at or below the fifth grade level.

208,000 students took the fall 1980 N.Y.C. High School Reading Test, and 15,700 of this group (7.6%) scored below 5.1. Some students were excused from taking the PSEN test because their past scores on reading tests were consistently high and there was no likelihood that they would fall into the PSEN* eligible population. The others who did not take the test fall into three groups: long term absentees (LTA's), who by definition have not attended school at all; "regular" absentees, who have come to school but were out on the day the test was given; and non-English speaking students who might be literate in their native language but whose scores on the LAB (Language Assessment Battery) test indicated that their reading competency could not be represented by a test in English.

* P.S.E.N. refers to Pupils with Special Education Needs, a term used by the State Education Department to describe pupils scoring more than two years below grade level.

Appendix #3 ii

In estimating the number of non-literate in-school students, the 7.6% figure is applied to the "regular" absentees (33,900) and to the non-English speaking student (6,600). Out of that group of 40,500 students, it is assumed that 7.6% or 3,078 would have scored below the 5.1 level had they been tested, resulting in a total estimate of 18,778 for the in-school non-literate population.

Out-of-school: Because the NYC school system presently has a high dropout rate, an estimate of non-literate 14-21 year olds must include the young people who are not attending school. We have used two different methods to estimate the size of this group:

1) Board of Education figures on students who are chronically absent, or discharged from the school system.

2) State Education Department data on the number of registered students and the number of graduates subtracted from the total estimated 14-21 year old population.

As previously noted, one group of students who did not take the high school reading test was chronic absentees. Every October, some 18,000 long term absentees known to the High School Division are identified.

During the course of every school year, the Board of Education discharges large numbers of students who either voluntarily leave school (i.e. move away) or who are considered "dropout"* discharges by the Board of Education. Of the 40,000 annual "dropout" discharges some 80% are signed out each year

* The Dropout Report p. 6

as 17 year olds. Thus a cohort of 32,000 out-of-school youth is created each year. About half the 18,000 LTA's identified in October are a part of this cohort.

In order to estimate the number of out-of-school youth between 14 and 21 at a given point in time (August 1980) we must take the annual number of 17 year old discharges and add those youth (now older than 17) who were signed out of school in earlier years:

79-80: 32,000 discharged 17 year olds
78-79: 32,000 (now 18)
77-78: 32,000 (now 19)
76-77: 32,000 (now 20)

To this sum of 128,000, we add the 9,000 LTAs who are on the High School Division register but are less than 17, giving a total of 137,000 out-of-school youth in August 1980 who are between the ages of 14 and 21.

Some number of these out-of-school youth receive a high school diploma by passing the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) examination administered by the State. Although the State Education Department does not maintain cumulative age data on the people who receive their GEDs, one can estimate that out of the roughly 21,000 who pass the GED in NYC every year, about 4,000 are under 21 years of age.*

* 2,000 a year received a GED from Auxiliary Services High School (ASHS), which mainly accepts young people between the ages of 16 to 21. We have estimated that another 2,000 under-21-year-olds successfully prepare for the exam at other centers or on their own.

Appendix #3 iv

Assuming that the 4,000 17-20 year olds who receive a GED are equally distributed between the four age groups, we can calculate that a total of 10,000 young people from the August 80 out-of-school population have received their GED diplomas, leaving 127,000 out-of-school of which some portion will be identified as non-literate.

Our second estimation method is based on recent population projections for 14 to 21 year olds in New York City. By extrapolating from the age data maintained by the New York State Department of Commerce (categorized in 5 year age cohorts), we arrive at a population estimate of 778,100 14 to 21 year olds. We then subtract from this figure three sub-populations: the number of high school graduates (in private as well as public schools) between August 1976 and September 1980, the number of public and private high school students enrolled as of October 1979, and the number of GEDs awarded to the discharged students and dropouts within the population. According to the New York State Department of Education there were 268,000 graduates, 412,800 high school students enrolled (LTAs and ASHS' students were subtracted from the total figure), and 10,000 GEDs awarded (see above). Using these data we arrive at a figure of 87,300 14 to 21 year old out-of-school non-graduates.

The 10 out-of-school programs visited by the Task Force tested their students at entry and found various percentages of students scoring below the 5.1 grade level. The percentages ranged from 30% at the Auxiliary Services High School programs to 60% for the Rikers Island School for adolescents and juveniles. If we conservatively assign an average percentage

of 40% to the estimates of the out-of-school population enumerated above (127,000 from our first method and 87,300 from our second method) we arrive at a minimum estimate of 34,900 and maximum estimate of 50,800 out-of-school youth who read below the 5.1 level and are in need of literacy services.

We can now estimate the total number of non-literate 14 to 21 year olds in New York City by combining the number of in-school youth who fall below 5.1 on the PSEN reading test (10,800) with the estimates of the number of out-of-school non-literate 14 to 21 year olds (50,800 and 34,900). The total number of 14 to 21 year olds in New York City who read below the 5.1 grade level ranges from 53,700 to 69,600. For purposes of discussion we will take as our best estimate 60,000 non-literate high school aged youth.